

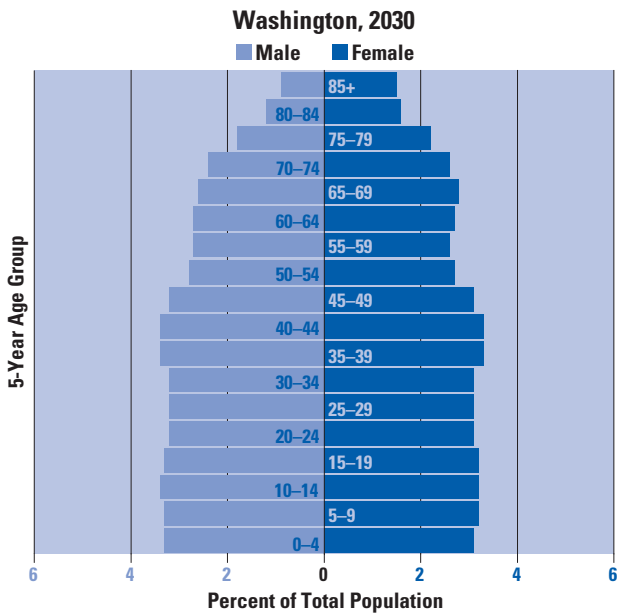
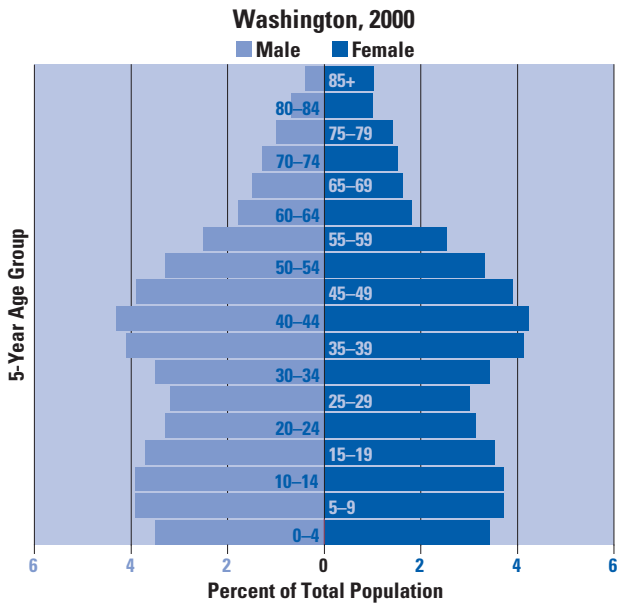
HEALTHY AGING *in* WASHINGTON STATE



The Need for Action



*Washington State's Projected Population
by Age and Sex, 2000–2030*



Source: 2002 Population Trends for Washington State,
Washington State Office of Financial Management

WHY IS HEALTHY AGING AN IMPORTANT ISSUE?

Washington has one of the most rapidly aging populations in the country. By 2020, over 1 million people in Washington will be age 65 or older — almost twice the number of people in that age group in 2002.

Chronic conditions account for three-fourths of Washington's health-related costs. Increasing numbers of older adults mean increasing numbers of people who are at greatest risk for chronic conditions. About 80% of people age 65 or older have at least one chronic condition; about 50% have at least two. About 70% of deaths in Washington are due to four major chronic conditions: heart disease, cancer, stroke, and chronic lung disease.

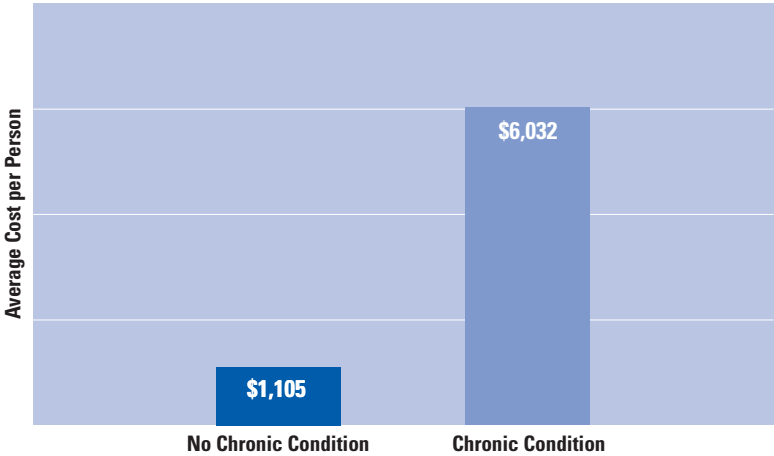
These chronic conditions threaten to reduce quality of life, increase health care costs, and overburden already strained health care resources. Clearly, more needs to be done to prevent age-associated disease and disability.

Much of the physical decline associated with aging can be prevented if we are physically active, eat a healthy diet, and avoid using tobacco. Thus, addressing these and other factors is key to protecting and improving health and quality of life as Washington's population ages.

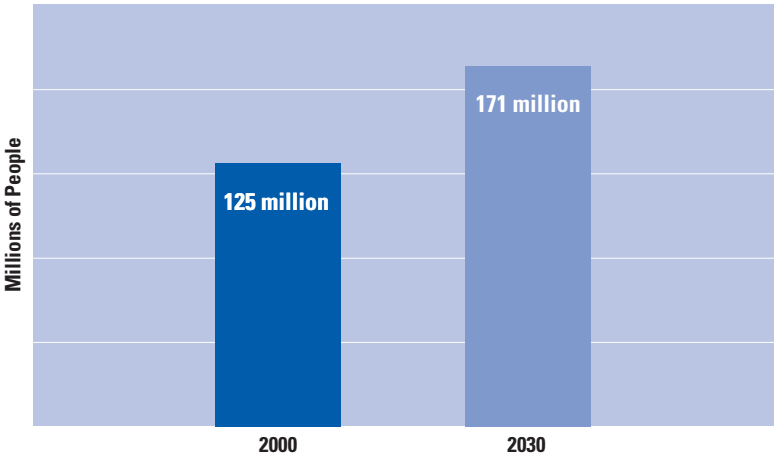
People need to be informed about how to remain healthy. They also need environments that encourage them to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors in their daily lives.

Costs and Trends in Chronic Conditions

Average Health Care Costs per Year
For People with and without Chronic Conditions



Projected Number of People with Chronic Conditions
In the United States, 2000 and 2030



Source: Partnership for Solutions:
Better Lives for People with Chronic Conditions

HOW IS THE HEALTH OF WASHINGTON'S AGING POPULATION?

A lot of progress has been made in preventing death from a number of age-related diseases. Over the past decade, death rates have decreased for several leading cancers, including colorectal, prostate, female breast and lung cancer in men. Death rates from heart disease and stroke have also declined.

However, while people in Washington have added years to their lives, they have not added healthy years. People are simply living longer with disease. As people live longer, we need to reduce the amount of time people are ill or disabled in order to improve quality of life and keep health care costs down.



As people live longer, preventing disease and injury from occurring and delaying the onset of disease will enable people to live well longer and help minimize health care costs.



WHAT AGE-RELATED DISEASES AND CONDITIONS ARE INCREASING?

Two conditions that impact older adults are increasing rapidly. These particular conditions not only cause premature death, but also cause disability and are very costly.

OBESEITY

Obesity costs the U.S. over \$100 billion per year in health costs and loss of productivity due to illness, disability and premature death. Businesses lose over \$10 billion per year due to disabilities, absenteeism, and higher health costs related to obesity. Obesity increases the risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, osteoarthritis, high cholesterol, cancer, and complications during surgery.

In Washington. . .

- Adult obesity doubled from almost 10% in 1990 to about 20% in 2000, and continues to increase.
- Over 60% of adults age 45 and older were obese or overweight in 2001.

DIABETES

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability in adults 45 and older in the U.S. It is the leading cause of kidney failure, causes almost 90,000 amputations each year, and increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, and blindness.

In Washington. . .

- The number of people diagnosed with diabetes increased over 60% between 1994 and 2000.
- Nearly 10% of people age 45 or older have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Over 100,000 people are estimated to have diabetes but do not know it.

OTHER INCREASING CONDITIONS

Due to growing numbers of older people, the actual numbers of people with certain other conditions are increasing, even if the rate of a condition is not increasing substantially. Increasing numbers of people with chronic conditions may further increase health care costs, reduce quality of life, and put more strain on health care facilities. Two examples of such conditions are:

Falls Among Older Adults

- The number of hospitalizations for falls among people in Washington 65 or older increased about 40% from 8,449 in 1990 to 11,742 in 2000.
- In 1999, fractures — most of which are due to falls — in people 65 and older in Washington cost Medicare over \$68 million.
- About one-third of people 65 or older who live at home will fall at least once a year.

Stroke

- The number of deaths from stroke in Washington increased about 36% from 2,719 in 1990 to 3,709 in 2000.
- The number of stroke survivors in Washington is not known. Nationally, the number of non-institutionalized stroke survivors increased from 1.5 million in the early 1970s to 2.4 million in the early 1990s.
- In 1999, hospitalizations with stroke as the primary diagnosis cost Washington over \$137 million just for acute care (this figure does not include long-term care or outpatient costs).

POLICY AND ENVIRONMENT: WHAT SUPPORTS HEALTHY BEHAVIORS IN OLDER ADULTS?

Our social and physical environments often present substantial barriers to health-promoting behavior. Policy and environmental changes can be made on a variety of levels to contribute to the well-being of the aging population. Examples include:

In the Work Place—

Employers benefit from a healthy workforce.

- Provide bike racks and flex time to allow for physical activity before or during the work day; create signs to encourage people to use the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator; support employee walking groups.
- Make healthy foods and drinks available in vending machines and cafeterias.
- Provide smoke-free environments.
- Provide employee benefit packages that include coverage for physical activity, such as a gym membership.

At the Local/Community Level

- Provide increased access to places for physical activity (well-designed sidewalks, bike lanes/paths, walking trails, and parks).
- Establish smoking bans and restrictions.
- Support food assistance/nutrition programs.
- Create community walking groups, gardens, and other social events that encourage physical activity, healthy eating, and social interaction.

Statewide

State level agencies can help promote health in our aging population by developing strong, multidisciplinary partnerships to address key policy areas. For example, to enable people to remain physically active as they age, the Washington State Department of Health is working with several other agencies and local communities to develop active community environments, and incorporate the needs and preferences of older adults in community design and transportation policies.

Prioritizing health promotion and disease prevention in policy development — especially for policies that impact physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use, and access to preventive health care — is key to keeping Washington's people healthy, happy, and productive as they age.



People who get regular physical activity, eat a healthy diet, and avoid tobacco reduce their risk of chronic diseases and have half the risk of disability of those who do not maintain these habits.



HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE POLICY AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERVENTIONS

Community Toolbox — <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu>

Guidance for the different tasks necessary to promote community health and development, including leadership, strategic planning, community assessment, grant writing, evaluation and more.

Guide to Community Preventive Services —

www.thecommunityguide.org

Evidence-based recommendations on public health interventions to reduce illness, disability, premature death, and environmental hazards that impair community health and quality of life.

Health Education Resource Exchange —

www.doh.wa.gov/HERE

A clearinghouse of public health education and health promotion projects, materials and resources in the state of Washington. Search for aging-related community projects.

Health Promotion Research Center, University of Washington — <http://depts.washington.edu/hprc>

One of 28 dedicated Prevention Research Centers in the U.S., funded by the CDC. HPRC is one of two centers whose focus is on healthy aging.

International Council on Active Aging — www.icaa.cc

Provides education, information, resources and tools for professionals in the retirement, assisted living, fitness, rehabilitation, and wellness fields.

Live Well, Live Long: Health Promotion & Disease Prevention for Older Adults — www.asaging.org/cdc/

The American Society on Aging has created strategies and materials to help national, state and local organizations in serving the health promotion and disease prevention needs of older adults.

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion: Healthy Aging — www.cdc.gov/aging/index.htm
CDC's Healthy Aging web site. Includes health information for older adults, statistics and research, publications, links to relevant organizations, free subscription to CDC's Healthy Aging ListServe, and more.

National Blueprint: Increasing Physical Activity Among Adults Age 50 and Older — www.rwjf.org/publications/publicationsPdfs/Age50_Blueprint_singlepages.pdf
A guide for organizations and agencies to plan strategies to help people age 50 and older increase their physical activity.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Active Living Resource Center — www.rwjf.org/programs/physicalActivity.jsp
Huge website with links to RWJ's various Active Living-related programs, policy and environmental information, grant announcements, community health projects, and more.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Washington State University — <http://nutrition.wsu.edu/markets/>
The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services receives funding from the USDA to provide fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs to Washington's low-income older adults. Approximately 7,000 seniors in our state will benefit over the next year.

Washington Business Group on Health — www.wbgh.com
Non-profit organization for large employers dedicated to finding innovative and forward-thinking solutions to the nation's most important health issues. Current special focus on obesity. WBGH offers two publications on healthy aging in the workforce.

Washington State Nutrition & Physical Activity Plan: Policy & Environmental Approaches —
www.doh.wa.gov/Publicat/NPA%20State%20Plan.pdf

STEPS TO HEALTHY AGING

Here are some messages you can share on how to remain healthy through the years:

Be physically active.

Eat a diet high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and low in saturated fats.

Avoid tobacco use.

Get enough calcium.

If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation.

Take care of your teeth and visit a dentist regularly.

See a health care provider regularly to find out about screening tests and immunizations you might need.

If you take any medications, make sure you are taking them properly.

Be socially active with friends and family; be involved with your community.

For more information:

Washington State Department of Health • Office of Health Promotion

PO Box 47833 • Olympia, WA 98504-7833

Phone: 360.236.3736 • Fax: 360.753.9100

DOH Pub 130-048

PUBLIC HEALTH
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON